

## **Waiting by prettyboiiharrington**

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**Summary:**

Harringrove Halloween Countdown // October 10 — Everyone knows the story of the Hollywood Tower Hotel and the six lives lost in that elevator. Simply a tragedy, or maybe there's something darker afoot. Some might recommend asking the victims yourself, considering rumor has it they still haunt the hotel, but they have more important things to worry about, like a proposal eighty years in the making.

## Waiting

For nearly eighty goddamn years Billy has been trapped in this stupid hotel with a grumpy old hotel manager and his weird daughter, his obnoxious superstar sister, her annoying security guard and this small town lounge singer – aka the love of his fucking life.

Billy's always been an asshole, Steve says it's part of his charm. Well, Steve used to say it before he let his glimmer dull. Steve was the predictable kind of ghost, sad and wanting for the future taken from him, beautiful and lonely and it made Billy fucking angry.

In the big scheme of things, it won't be long until a century has passed and he still hasn't been able to propose. He had waited for the perfect moment, and the party of the century seemed like the best option, the opportunity of a lifetime, a brilliant story for their grandkids, but they never made it to that party and now all Billy heard when he was left alone with silence were two words — too late.

Billy has always known he's selfish, but he spent too much time wanting to be a star, to be the man everyone always talked about, that he overthought every detail of his life and has ultimately made his death all the more miserable.

It doesn't help that when Billy tries to scare off every newcomer that strolls into their hotel, Steve grows more and more bitter, angry at Billy for always scaring off their chances of help. Truth be told, Billy is miserable, but he doesn't know what happens when this is all over and he is terrified that in the end, he and Steve will end up apart; he's even more terrified that Steve won't mind after having to put up with him for so long.

He doesn't expect their new guests to be so stubborn, and he especially can't predict them enlisting the help of the manager's weird, extremely paranoid great grandson Will, considering the kid normally refuses to go into the hotel.

Truthfully, Billy isn't completely convinced that these people are trustworthy or even worth his time until the very end, but Steve has started looking at him in that soft way he used to, and his tone is

gentle and pleading instead of tired and indifferent. Billy doesn't exactly feel alive again, because that's just not possible, but he feels electrified, he feels whole.

He doesn't want to say goodbye when the time comes, too grateful to their new friends — a concept he didn't think was possible anymore. He spent far too much of his life, and death, being cruel; he apologizes and gives his thanks, doesn't miss how Steve's hand twitches, desperate to wipe Billy's tears but not daring to interrupt. He steps in the elevator and tries not to be scared anymore. The sound of a band playing somewhere upstairs is promising. He doesn't look up until Steve pulls him out of the elevator and tells him to look up. All of their friends have been waiting for them. All these years, the party was encapsulated in its own bubble waiting for the most important guests to arrive.

"They didn't forget us," he whispers, grabbing Steve's hand and pulling him so that they're face to face, body's pressed together as Billy moves to hold Steve's face in his hands. He looks beautiful and bright again. Happy, pure, and always so goddamn glamorous. All these years and Billy still loves him, beating heart or not.

"Course they didn't, don't be an idiot," Steve teases, but he seems just as relieved.

Billy licks his lips and grins. Steve knows the times have changed and the world's a lot more sexually progressive than it was in 1939 but that tongue is still so goddamn sinful. He braces himself for what Billy might say, now that he knows his snakelike charm is still fully intact.

"Been waiting for this moment," Billy whispers, leaning forward to brush a gentle kiss to Steve's lips. He reaches into his pocket, finally pulling out the godforsaken ring. If Steve says no he'll kill him — he's not sure how you kill a dead man but he'll sure as hell find a way.